

**March/April 2007**

## *The Eyes of Innocence*

by Jon Mundy, Ph.D.

### **The Correction of Perception**

A blind man, near where we live, made the headlines in the local paper the other day. It seems that a horse, whose reins he was holding, suddenly turned its head. Not seeing the horse, the man was hit in the head, which restored his sight. Sometimes when we get hit really hard with a 2x4 called "reality," it can wake us up and bring "light" to our minds. Sometimes we've got to make some big mistake to understand why the truth is true. Though it's not the best way, more people wake up through experiences of crash and burn than in any other way.

Most of the readers of *Miracles* know I went "off Course" last fall and got caught in a judgment. Fortunately, if we stick with the Course, it brings us back "on Course" and not just back on Course – it can lead to an even deeper clarity as to why – the truth is true. I am not bothered by the parts of the Course that I don't understand. I'm bothered by the parts that I do understand. The Course is relentless in its teaching. It is absolutely *uncompromising* which is why it works so well. The Course never gives in, and if you will do it – it will do you. Once it gets a hold of you, – once the *alchemy of miracles* begins to work within, it will work its way all the way home to God again. The Course is *persistent* in trying to help us to see our responsibility in our decision making.

### **Some Basic Postulates from *A Course In Miracles***

**1. Projection makes perception.** Enlightened beings and mystics being excused, for most of us what we see is our own projections coming back our way. For this reason, we don't see anything as it is in truth. All we see is what we project – what we judge. The Course says that if we perceive the ego of our brother, we must be looking through our own ego. Spirit sees only perfection. everything else, no matter how it looks, everything else is a fantasy.

**2. Perception is a choice.** Our ability to choose is, the Course says, our last remaining freedom. We are at each moment at choice as to what we see.

**3. There is such a thing a true perception.**

### **The Acquisition of True Perception**

**True Perception is a Miracle.** The workbook of *A Course In Miracles* is divided into two main sections, the first dealing with the undoing of our seeing and the second, with the acquisition of true perception. True perception corrects the ego's misperceptions of separation by reflecting the true unity of the Son of God. This is the complete opposite of the way we see the world through the ego's glasses.

### **Innocence and the Infinite Infant**

*Little child, innocent of sin, follow in gladness the way to certainty.*

ACIM T. 21. IV. 8:3.

You can take a baby and look them straight in the eye, and they will look right back at you without looking away. How come babies can do that, but you can't do

it with some adults? Infants come from the infinite. The “in” prefix of both words means “not,” in-finity means “not” finite.” The *in* of infant also means “not.” It comes from the Latin word *fari*, meaning “to speak.” An infant is “not able to talk.” Infants have not yet developed language. They do not yet have words with which to concretize the world. We move from infancy to early childhood when we begin to develop words, which are what gives us a hold on the world.

Prior to the development of words, the infant – just is. Infants have nothing to hide. They are present in immediacy. They have no past. They have no guilt. They do not know about the future. They, they have little to fear. Infants are mystics, in so far as they have not yet learned to judge. They don’t even have words with which to judge. They see in innocence. They just are. I heard a story about a baby who was left sleeping in a crib in a backyard. While the mother had gone into the house, a snake crawled into the crib. The child woke up and apparently thinking the snake was a toy, picked it up and shook it so continuously and violently that when the mother returned, she found the child shaking a now dead snake.

*Heaven lies about us in our infancy.*  
William Wordsworth

When we change our vision from the ego's perspective to that of Spirits, we behold a wholly sinless world. As we see a sinless world, the love God feels for us becomes us. Correct perception sees innocence, sinlessness, freedom. It is, the Course says, "The Vision of Christ." What is the Vision of Christ?

*Christ's eyes are open and He will look upon whatever you see  
with love if you accept His vision as yours.*  
*The Holy Spirit keeps the vision of Christ for every Son of God who sleeps.*  
ACIM T-12.VI.4:4

### **The Body's Eyes**

In the Don Juan/ Carlos Castaneda series, very often when the word “see” or “seeing” is used, it’s in italics – meaning that we are not talking about “seeing” with the body’s eyes.

*The body's eyes see only form.  
They cannot see beyond what they were made to see.  
And they were made to look on error and not see past it.  
Theirs is indeed a strange perception, for they can see only illusions,  
unable to look beyond the granite block of sin,  
and stopping at the outside form of nothing.*  
ACIM T-22. III. 5:3-6

When I first fell in love with my high school sweetheart, I remember looking at her and thinking she could do no wrong. She wouldn’t even know how. She was just virtue, purity, and innocence. A similar thing happened many years later when I fell in love with my wife Dolores. When the heart is open, we see truly. When we are in love, we are happy about the way we see things. When we fall out of love, we are unhappy about the way we see things. Innocence has been lost.

### **The Vision of Christ**

The Course talks about *The Vision of Christ*, the *eyes of Christ*, the *eyes of innocence*, *true perception*, *right-mindedness* and *spiritual sight*. These words and phrases are synonyms, --

pointing to the same experience. To have true perception or spiritual sight is to have *perfect vision*. Perfect vision is the vision of Christ. Perfect vision does not see sin. It cannot see. It cannot see what is not there.

*To be in the Kingdom is merely to focus your full attention on it.*

ACIM T-7. III. 4:1

During the late 1990's, a group of social psychologists asked people who claimed to be happy to provide them with a list of reasons why, they were happy and then they compared the various lists. One of the things the scientists discovered was that happy people possess a great ability to focus. Remember how good you felt in school when you were listening carefully to a lecture or focused on a textbook lesson and got it clearly, you felt good. You were happy because you were able to concentrate and you gained some new knowledge. The Course asks us to focus our vision in such a way that it goes beyond just seeing with the body's eyes.

Mystics see mistakes or errors just as anyone else does – they do not, however, judge the error nor do they complain about other people not seeing as clearly as they do. To judge the mistake is to amplify the mistake. To say we must look at the world with eyes of innocence does not mean that we are to permit murderers to murder – nor can we allow rapists to rape, thieves to steal, nor swindlers to take advantage of us. If a person does not know how to behave in society, society has to step forward to prevent that individual from bringing further harm to himself or others. Still, the Vision of Christ sees everything in light. Christ's eyes are open, and He looks upon whatever is seen with love – if we accept His vision as our own, we see the same way He does. This is the only way we can see and at the same time be happy. The Vision of Christ is in everyone without exception. It's all a matter of seeing.

*The soul is a poor judge of evil.*

*To begin with, she now sees God in other people,  
sees the best in them, and is saddened when others go against their  
own best interests – the great good in themselves. Instead of evil,  
what she sees is ignorance, blindness, and spiritual immaturity.*

*As Christ said, "They know not what they do."*

Bernadette Roberts, *The Path To No Self*, p. 96

Even if we see evil, ignorance, and spiritual immaturity, it's not our job to point it out. The task is to continue to see with eyes of innocence, even when miscreant behavior is at hand. The eyes of the innocent see correctly because no judgment is made about what is seen.

From 1982-1990, I worked as a Adjunct Professor in the Philosophy Department of Mercy College, in Dobbs Ferry, New York. Mercy College saw fit to send me to prison. Thus, it was for 8 years I worked as a teacher inside Sing-Sing Prison for Men and Bedford Prison for Women. I did not know my students' crimes. In fact, we teachers were not to ask our students about their crimes. If a student volunteered the information that was one thing, but we were not to ask. I had a student in a course on *The Psychology of Religion* at the women's prison named Lisa. She was magnificent in every way. She is the only student I ever gave an A+ to. To receive an A+, you must be extraordinarily good. Lisa not only read the assignment for the class, she read as much as she could of the bibliography in the back of the text book! Of course, she had a lot of time to read – but she also enjoyed it. On more than one occasion, her cell was condemned as a fire hazards and the books removed. She then would just start building a new library.

Lisa always sat in the front row. She liked to make plays on words and we would often “spar” with each other with little intellectual jabs. I came to admire her tremendously. One evening as I was walking out of the prison with another teacher I asked, “Do you have Lisa as a student? Isn’t she marvelous?” Then the other teacher said, “You know her crime don’t you? She drowned her daughter in the bathtub.” I was stunned – absolutely speechless. What if I had known her crime before I got to know her so well, would I have come to admire and respect her so much? I saw innocence in Lisa even though she had (in the past) committed a horrific crime.

### **Animals and Innocence**

I once had a cocker spaniel named Joyful. Joyful was so full of joy that when I would return home after being gone, she would get so excited her whole body would quiver. Her tongue would hang out and her little tail wagged so much, I thought it would wear out. When she was a young pup, she would get so excited she would pee. Fortunately, she outgrew the peeing but she continued to get so animated upon my return home that her own body would quake.

Most domestic animals are innocent of eye, which is one of the reasons we love them so much. Animals, such as dogs, do not know if the people who care for them are saints or sinners. There is a story about a prison where they allowed prisoners to have small pets. A man with a reputation for being hard-hearted, a prisoner on death row for murder, was given a kitten. Everyone noticed the compassion, love, and dedication which he gave to the kitten. When asked why he was so nice to the kitten while he was so hateful to others, he said that the kitten was the only thing which ever loved him.

*Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.*

Matthew 5:8

**Innocence is Truth.** Nothing but truth exists, and right-mindedness sees only truth and perfection – even behind the mask of ego and separateness. Only what we create with God has existence. This is all that the innocent can see. The innocent see only with God. They see only good. We have true vision or true perception only when our hearts are pure. Any impurity like selfishness, judgment, complaint, or attack contaminates vision. We want to be innocent of eye, and the innocent of eye do not see problems. This can, at times, make innocence seem too “simple,” too immature, and “naïve.”

*Innocence is not a partial attribute.*

*It is not real until it is total.*

*The partly innocent are apt to be quite foolish at times.*

*It is not until their innocence becomes a viewpoint with universal application that it becomes wisdom. Innocent or true perception means that you never misperceive and always see truly. More simply, it means that you never see what does not exist, and always see what does.*

ACIM 3. II. 2:1-6

The eyes of innocence can sometimes be naïve. It is better, however, to be naïve, better to be taken advantage of, than to take the advantage. As Will Rogers said it, “*I would rather be the man who bought the Brooklyn Bridge than the man who sold it.*”

The innocent of eye do not see sin. Of course, they see mistakes. They simply do not engage in judgment of the mistake. So it is, for example, that a parent may see a child make a mistake – yet they continue to love the child despite the mistake.

Just as we are as innocent in God's eyes, so we see our brothers and sisters correctly, only when we see their innocence. When my daughter was a teenager, there were times she could push me to the point where only ego seemed to rule. I learned during these moments that the best solution was to turn around and walk away, and broach the subject another day – a day when sanity would prevail. Love looks beyond the surface to see the face of Christ shining back our way.

*Walk you in glory, with your head held high, and fear no evil.*

*The innocent are safe because they share their innocence.*

*And every error disappeared because they saw it not.*

*Who looks for glory finds it where it is.*

*Where could it be but in the innocent?*

ACIM 23 in. 3

Spiritual seeing extends far beyond the body's eyes. In mysticism this is called the *Noetic* quality, meaning that in the experience, we come *to know* something. As with the ancient Gnostics, the Course says it is possible to “know” God. God is not just an idea. In two different instances, the Course says, “God is life.” And in four instances, the Course says, “God is love.” These sentences are tautologies. They can be read from the left or the right and they still make sense. God is Life. God is Love. Life is God. Love is God, and simple logic leads us to Life is Love, and Love is Life. The more alive we are, the more we know of love. The more we know of love, the more we know of God.

Lesson 313 from the workbook, *Now let a new perception come to me*, opens with a prayer and with that prayer, I close.

*Father, there is a vision which beholds all things as sinless,*

*so that fear has gone, and where it was is love invited in.*

*And love will come wherever it is asked. This vision is Your gift.*

*The eyes of Christ look on a world forgiven.*

*In His sight are all its sins forgiven, for He sees no sin in anything He looks*

*upon. Now let His true perception come to me, that I may waken*

*from the dream of sin and look within upon my sinlessness, which You have*

*kept completely undefiled upon the altar to Your holy Son,*

*the Self with which I would identify.*

Peace,

*Jon*



